

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-10 AID-05 TRSE-00 OMB-01 DHA-02 /081 W

----- 089489

R 160610Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3174

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISCIO 1202

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SO, US

SUBJECT: US/SOMALI RELATIONS

REF: MOGADISCIO 1169

1. FOLLOWING PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIALS THE PRESIDENT OFFERED COCA-COLA, FANTA ORANGE, SOMALI GRAPEFRUIT JUICE OR CAPPUCINO. HAVING EXPERIENCED THE EFFECTS OF COFFEE AND SMOKED CAMEL'S MILK, I ACCEPTED FANTA.

2. THE PRESIDENT REVIEWED THE HISTORY OF SOMALIA, ITS PEOPLE, RELATIONS WITH ITS IMMEDIATE NEIGHBORS, ITS ROLE IN AFRICAN FORUMS, THE THIRD WORLD, AND THE UN, AND FINALLY, RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES. THE DISCUSSION -- A MONOLOGUE -- LASTED OVER AN HOUR. THROUGHOUT IT WAS RELAXED, WARM, FRIENDLY, LOW-KEY, DIRECT, CLEAR, AND APPARENTLY UNREHEARSED. MEMCON FOLLOWS. MEANWHILE FOLLOWING ARE SIAD'S VIEWS ON UNITED STATES/SOMALI RELATIONS.

3. FOLLOWING A BRIEF REVIEW OF OUR RELATIONS SINCE INDEPENDENCE AND A MORE DETAILED BALANCE SHEET SINCE THE REVOLUTION, THE PRESIDENT THANKED THE US ON BEHALF OF THE SDR AND ITS PEOPLE FOR OUR IMMEDIATE POSITIVE ACTIONS IN PROVIDING DROUGHT RELIEF ASSISTANCE. HIS
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PEOPLE WERE GRATEFUL AND HE ASSURED ME THAT THE GRAINS WERE REACHING

THE AFFECTED POPULATION RAPIDLY AND EFFICIENTLY. AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND, SIAD SAID HE WAS CONCERNED ABOUT OUR BILATERAL ASSISTANCE

SOMALIS WERE A DESPERATELY POOR PEOPLE WHO, SINCE INDEPENDENCE AND UNTIL THE REVOLUTION, WERE FURTHER IMPOVERISHED BY "CRIMINALS", WHOSE GOALS WERE FEATHERING THEIR OWN NESTS. WITHOUT ANY CAPITAL AND WITH MINIMUM EXPERIENCE IN DEMOCRATIC CAPITALISM, THE MILITARY CHOSE THE PATH OF SOMALI SOCIALISM AS THE BEST FORM OF GOVERNMENT TO DEVELOP SOMALIA AND FIGHT AGAINST IGNORANCE, POVERTY AND DISEASE. HE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND HOW, ON THE ONE HAND, THE US HAD INTERRUPTED BILATERAL ASSISTANCE AND, ON THE OTHER COULD RESPOND SO POSITIVELY IN THE EXTRAORDINARY DISASTER. IN HIS VIEW THE DISASTER WAS AN EXTREME CASE OF THE CENTURIES-OLD BATTLE WHICH THE SOMALI NOMADS HAVE BEEN WAGING AGAINST POVERTY, DISEASE, AND IGNORANCE.

4. ABRUPTLY SWITCHING TO HIS UNITED STATES VISIT (OCT. '74), SIAD SAID HE HAD RETURNED HOME CONVINCED THAT HE HAD NOT ONLY PROFITED FROM MEETING WITH PRESIDENT FORD BUT, IN ADDITION, HE CAME AWAY BELIEVING IN HIS OWN MIND THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD UNDERSTOOD CLEARLY THE NATURE AND REALITY OF SDR SOCIALISM AS WELL AS ITS SECURITY MEASURES (SIZE AND NATURE OF MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT). HIS GOVERNMENT HAD TO PROTECT ITS PEOPLE AND ITS 3000 KM LONG COASTLINE - ADDING -- THE LONGEST IN AFRICA EXCEPT SOUTH AFRICA. TO DO THIS HE HAD ACCEPTED RUSSIAN ASSISTANCE, EMPHASIZING THAT THE SDR HAD NO AGGRESSIVE INTENTIONS AND STATING EMPHATICALLY THAT: HE HAD NO MISUNDERSTANDINGS WITH HIS COUNTERPARTS IN ETHIOPIA OR KENYA, NO MATTER WHAT THOSE WHO SAY OTHERWISE WOULD HAVE YOU BELIEVE. DIGRESSING, SIAD SAID HE WILLINGLY PAYS TAXES FOR MEMBERS OF HIS IMMEDIATE FAMILY TO THE ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT -- SO DOES ARTEH. TO DO OTHERWISE WOULD SUBJECT HIS FAMILY TO UNDESIREABLE COMPLICATIONS. RETURNING TO THE SUBJECT, SIAD ASKED -- RHETORICALLY -- QTE WHO IS BEHIND SUCH INACCURATE FALSEHOODS AS CROZIER'S TORY IN 'CONFLICT'? (I.E., BRIAN CROZIER'S "SOVIET PRESENCE IN SOMALIA" -- PUBLISHED BY INSTITUTE FOR STUDY OF CONFLICT, 1975 -- MOGADISCIO 391). SIMILAR DISTORTIONS HAVE APPEARED ELSEWHERE AND, WHILE RSUNDERSTAND THAT THEY HAVE NO OFFICIAL STATUS, THEY ONLY SERVE TO CONFUSE. I WANT YOU TO UNDERSTAND, AS I SAID IN MY REPLY TO YOUR SPEECH, MY INCERE HOPE THAT YOU WILL BE ABLE TO LEARN AND UNDERSTAND OUR EFFORTS TO SUCCEED IN OUR BATTLE AGAINST IGNORANCE, DISEASE, AND POVERTY. I WANT YOU TO UNDERSTAND OUR SECURITY MEASURES ARE UNFORTUNATELY

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MISREPRESENTED BY SENATIONAL JOURNALISM AND STATEMENTS OF PARTIAL TRUTH BY SOME SENIOR USG OFFICIALS TO SERVE OTHER ENDS. WE ARE SOVERIGN. WE HAVE SECURITY REQUIREMENTS. WE DO NOT HAVE ANY AGGRESSIVE INTENTIONS -- AGAINST ANY COUNTRY. WE HAVE PROBLEMS WITH OUR NEIGHBORS; OUR PEOPLE HAVE RIGHTS WHICH ARE IN DISPUTE, BUT THESE WILL BE SOLVED PEACEFULLY. FINALLY, THERE IS NO FOREIGN POWER WHICH CAN USE SOMALI FACILITIES FOR AGGRESSIVE PURPOSE. UNQTE.

5. AT THIS POINT, SIAD CHOSE NOT RPT NOT TO WAVE AWAY A THIRD INTERRUPTION BY A MILITARY AIDE CLEARLY INDICATING THE PRESIDENT WAS BEHIND SCHEDULE.

6. I THANKED THE PRESIDENT FOR HIS TIME AND SAID HE HAD GIVEN ME MUCH TO THAINK ABOUT. I SAID I WOULD, OF COURSE, LIKE TO REPLY IN DETAIL FOLLOWING MY INITIAL CALLS ON HIS MINISTERS AND DIPLOMATIC COLLEAGUES, BUT FOR THE MOMENT ALL I COULD STATE WAS THAT I WAS DEDICATED TO RESOLVING ANY AND ALL MINUNDERSTANDINGS IN OUR RELATIONS, AND TO DO THIS I WOULD NEED HIS HELP AS WELL AS OPEN LINES OF COMMUNICATION TO ALL OF HIS SENIOR OFFICIALS. THE PRESIDENT, PARTIALLY LOOKING AT ARTEH, REPLIED, "OUR DOORS-ARE OPEN."
LOUGHRAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, CREDENTIALS PRESENTATION, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 AUG 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975MOGADI01202
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750284-0096
From: MOGADISCIO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750846/aaaabnoi.tel
Line Count: 128
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 MOGADISCIO 1169
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 AUG 2003 by MartinML>; APPROVED <17 DEC 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: US/SOMALI RELATIONS
TAGS: PFOR, SO, US, COCA-COLA, FANTA, (SIAD, BARRE MOHAMED)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006